

Types of Nouns : 1-Proper Nouns 2-Common Nouns
Forms of Nouns : 1-Plural Nouns 2- Possessive Forms

Proper Nouns

A proper noun is the name of a person, place or thing. Proper nouns should always be capitalized.

Examples:

Toronto
Mr. Brown
Sally

Common Nouns

A common noun is any noun that is not a proper noun. Common nouns are not capitalized.

Examples: the city

a leader

this woman

Plural Forms

The plural form of a noun indicates more than one. The plural form is usually formed by adding an s or es.

Examples: one week, two weeks

a house, many houses

one box, two boxes

Nouns that end in a consonant followed by a y are made plural by dropping the y and adding ies.

Example: one country, two countries

Nouns that end in a vowel followed by a y are made plural by adding s.

Example: one toy, two toys

Nouns that end in f or fe drop the f or fe and add ves.

Example: one leaf, two leaves

Certain irregular nouns have special plural forms.

Examples: one foot, two feet

a mouse, many mice

Possessive Forms

The possessive form of a noun indicates ownership or modifies another noun. The possessive form is usually formed by **adding 's to the end of a noun.**

Examples: the player's equipment

the woman's job

Canada's government

Articles

First the good news: There are only three articles in English: a, an and the.

There are two types of articles indefinite 'a' and 'an' or definite 'the'. You also need to know when not to use an article.

The bad news is that their proper use is complex, especially when you get into the advanced use of English. Quite often you have to work it out by what *sounds* right, which can be frustrating for a learner.

Indefinite articles - a and an (determiners)

A and **an** are the indefinite articles. They refer to something not specifically known to the person you are communicating with.

A and **an** are used before nouns that introduce something or someone you have not mentioned before:-

For "I saw an elephant this morning."

example: "I ate a banana for lunch."

A and **an** are also used when talking about your profession:-

"I am an English teacher."

"I am a builder."

You use **a** when the noun you are referring to begins with a consonant (b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y or z), for example, "a city", "a factory", and "a hotel".

-You use **an** when the noun you are referring to begins with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u)

-Pronunciation changes this rule. It's the sound that matters, not the spelling.

-If the next word begins with a consonant sound when we say it, for example, "university" then we use **a**. If the next word begins

with a vowel sound when we say it, for example "hour" then we use an.

-We say "university" with a "y" sound at the beginning as though it were spelt "youniversity".

So, "a university" IS correct.

-We say "hour" with a silent h as though it were spelt "our".

So, "an hour" IS correct.

(Lots of people get this wrong - including native speakers.)

Definite Article - the (determiners)

ð i:

ð ə

Strong pronunciation

Weak pronunciation

You use the when you know that the listener knows or can work out what particular person/thing you are talking about.

For "The apple you ate was rotten."

example: "Did you lock the car?"

You should also use the when you have already mentioned the thing you are talking about.

For "She's got two children; a girl and a boy. The girl's eight and the boy's fourteen."

example:

We use **the** to talk about geographical points on the globe.

For the North Pole, the equator

example:

We use **the** to talk about rivers, oceans and seas

For the Nile, the Pacific, the English channel

example:

We also use **the** before certain nouns when we know there is only one of a particular thing.

For the rain, the sun, the wind, the world, the earth, the White House etc..

example:

However if you want to describe a particular instance of these you should use a/an.

For "I could hear the wind." / "There's a cold wind blowing."

example: "What are your plans for the future?" / "She has a promising future ahead of her."

The is also used to say that a particular person or thing being mentioned is the best, most famous, etc. In this use, 'the' is usually given strong pronunciation:

For "Harry's Bar is the place to go."

example: "You don't mean you met the Tony Blair, do you?"

!Note - **The** doesn't mean all:-

For "The books are expensive." = (Not all books are expensive, just the ones I'm talking about.)

example: "Books are expensive." = (All books are expensive.)

No article

We usually use no article to talk about things in general:-

Inflation is rising.

People are worried about rising crime. (Note! People generally, so no article)

You do not use an article when talking about sports.

For My son plays football.

example: Tennis is expensive.

You do not use an article before uncountable nouns when talking about them generally.

For Information is important to any organization.

example: Coffee is bad for you.

You do not use an article before the names of countries except where they indicate multiple areas or contain the words (state(s), kingdom, republic, union). Kingdom, state, republic and union are nouns, so they need an article.

"Pleased to meet you, John." Or "Nice to meet you, John."

John could say:

"Nice to meet you too, Sarah." Or "Hello, Sarah."

Introducing clients

"Mr Mitchell, I'd like to introduce you to my manager, Henry Lewis."

Mr Mitchell could then say:

"How do you do?" and Henry Lewis also says "How do you do?"

Or Mr Mitchell could say:

"Pleased to meet you." Or "Good to meet you."

Speaking Tip

"**How do you do?**" is quite formal for British English speakers and the reply to this question is to repeat the phrase, "**How do you do?**" (as strange as that may sound!)

At a more informal party

When you introduce two of your friends to each other, you can simply say, "John, this is Sarah."

Cultural considerations

At work, one person may have higher status – your boss, or a client, for example. It's polite to address them as Mr / Ms until the situation becomes more informal.

If someone says, "Please call me (Henry)", you know you can use first names. If someone uses your first name, you can use their first name too.

People in European and English-speaking cultures often shake hands when they meet someone for the first time.

* Don't forget to smile! :-

Saying dates and numbers in English

Dates

We can say dates either with the day before the month, or the month before the day:

The first of January / January the first.

Remember to use ordinal numbers for dates.

(The first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the twenty-second, the thirty-first etc.)

Years

For years up until 2000, separate the four numbers into two pairs of two.

1965 = nineteen sixty-five

1871 = eighteen seventy-one

1999 = nineteen ninety-nine

For this decade, you need to say "two thousand and —" in British English:

2001 = two thousand and one

2009 = two thousand and nine

Large numbers

Divide the number into units of hundreds and thousands:

400,000 = four hundred thousand (no s plural)

If the number includes a smaller number, use "and" in British English:

450,000 = four hundred and fifty thousand

400,360 = four hundred thousand and three hundred and sixty

Fractions, ratios and percentages

$\frac{1}{2}$ = one half

$\frac{1}{3}$ = one third

$\frac{1}{4}$ = one quarter

$\frac{1}{5}$ = one fifth

$\frac{1}{6}$ = one sixth etc

$\frac{3}{5}$ = three fifths

1.5% = one point five percent

0.3% = zero point three percent

2:1 = two to one

Saying 0

Depending on the context, we can pronounce zero in different ways:

2-0 (football) = Two nil

30 – 0 (tennis) = Thirty love

604 7721 (phone number) = six oh four...

0.4 (a number) = nought point four / zero point four
0C (temperature) = zero degrees

Talking about calculations

+ (plus)
 $2 + 1 = 3$ (two plus one equals three)
- (minus / take away)
 $5 - 3 = 2$ (five minus three equals two / five take away three equals two)
x (multiplied by / times)
 $2 \times 3 = 6$ (two multiplied by three equals six / two times three equals six)
/ (divided by)
 $6 / 3 = 2$ (six divided by three equals two)

Conversation Starters

Everyday Idioms

Time Idioms

the big time	Mafalda used to work in a supermarket. Then she hit the big time and she got a job as the star actress in a movie.
to call it a day	When I finish writing this composition, I'm going to call it a day and go to bed.
for the time being	We have no extra money. So for the time being , we can't move to a nicer apartment.
high time	It's high time we bought a new car. The old one keeps dying out on the highway.
in no time	When Sid got sick suddenly, we called the emergency number and the paramedics were here in no time .
in the nick of time	The vase was just about to fall off the sink, but she grabbed it in the nick of time , so it didn't break.
to kill time	We were a bit to kill time early for the movie. To kill time , we went to the best food restaurant near the cinema for a cup of coffee.
to make time	I was planning to work on my report all day, but I'll make time in the morning to meet with you and discuss the problem.
on the spur of the moment	They didn't plan to go away for the weekend. They decided to go to the mountains on the spur of the moment .
to take one's time	It's better to take your time when doing tests than to hurry and make mistakes.
the time is right	The time is right to invest in a house because real estate prices are low now.

Colour idioms

black and white	thinking of everything or judging everything in a simple way and seeing it as either good or bad The situation isn't as black and white as it seems; it's much more complicated.
black out	to darken by putting out the electric lights or covering over the windows Londoners had to black out their windows during the war so that the enemy aircraft could not see the city.
black out	to lose consciousness

blue in the face	He blacked out after standing up for three hours in the parade. First aid staff attended to him. to be very angry or upset; to be excited and very emotional She argued with her husband until she was blue in the face but he wouldn't see her point of view.
Green	to be inexperienced and/or immature He's a bit green - he still believes that someone is going to come and help him out of his situation. He doesn't realize he has to do it himself.
green with envy	to be very jealous and full of envy I was green with envy when I heard that she was going on holiday to Spain for a week while I had to stay and work.
in the red	to have debts The company has been in the red for two years now. We now owe over \$500,000 to our suppliers and the bank.
red tape	excessive bureaucracy Many businesses complain about the amount of red tape that they must deal with in former Eastern-bloc countries.
out of the blue	when something happens without a warning, by surprise His decision to leave the company came completely out of the blue. No one expected it at all.

Telephone language and phrases in English

How to answer and speak on the phone

Answering the phone Good morning/afternoon/evening, York Enterprises. Elizabeth Jones speaking. Who's calling, please? Introducing yourself This is Paul Smith speaking. Hello, this is Paul Smith from Speak International. Asking for someone Could I speak to John Martin, please? I'd like to speak to John Martin, please. Could you put me through to John Martin, please? Could I speak to someone who ... Explaining I'm afraid Mr Martin isn't in at the moment. I'm sorry, he's in a meeting at the moment. I'm afraid he's on another line at the moment. Putting someone on hold Just a moment, please. Could you hold the line, please? Hold the line, please.	Problems I'm sorry, I don't understand. Could you repeat that, please? I'm sorry, I can't hear you very well. Could you speak up a little, please? I'm afraid you've got the wrong number. I've tried to get through several times but it's always engaged. Could you spell that, please? Putting someone through One moment, please. I'll see if Mr Jones is available. I'll put you through. I'll connect you. I'm connecting you now. Taking a message Can I take a message? Would you like to leave a message? Can I give him/her a message? I'll tell Mr Jones that you called I'll ask him/her to call you as soon as possible.
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